



Durham Constabulary

Press Release

June 20, 2011

TEN-POINT PLEDGE TO PROTECT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Durham Constabulary has signed up to a ten-point promise to 'stand by' people with learning disabilities.

The promise has been devised by Mencap as part of its three-year campaign, Stand By Me, to end hate crime against people with learning disabilities.

The campaign, being launched nationally on Monday at the start of Learning Disability Week, is aimed at improving the way the criminal justice system deals with such victims.

Assistant Chief Constable Michael Banks will officially endorse Durham Constabulary's commitment to the promise when he meets representatives from Mencap at County Hall on Monday.

He said: "Durham Constabulary is committed to protecting all vulnerable members of society and taking action against those who target them.

"It's particularly important that no one should be at a disadvantage because they have a disability. Everyone has the right to a fair and equitable criminal justice system."

Mr Peter Thompson, chair of Durham Police Authority, added: "I wholeheartedly endorse these comments on behalf of the police authority, which is committed to protecting the interests of all our communities."

Brian Smith, from the Durham Disability Parliament, which is hosting Monday's event, said: "We're removing some of the barriers which have stopped people with learning disabilities from reporting hate crime in the past.

"Our members have built good relationships with Durham Constabulary officers who regularly attend our monthly meetings throughout the county.

"In August we're getting involved in some interview skills training where some of our members will play the part of witnesses to a crime. It all helps to promote understanding."

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ACC Banks will sign up to the promise on Monday, June 20, at County Hall, Durham at 10.30am.

Full details of the ten-point promise can be found on www.mencap.org.uk

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